

## SUPPLIER NEWS BREAKS

### PharmaSmart BP platform gets pharmacists engaged

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ROCHESTER, N.Y. – PharmaSmart International Inc. has devised a Total Blood Pressure Management platform that the company said elevates the role of pharmacists in medication therapy management (MTM) and chronic disease management (CDM).

The blood pressure screening system provider said Monday that the platform, demonstrated at the recent NACDS 2011 Pharmacy Services and Technology Conference, features patented health IT solutions connecting the patient, physician and pharmacist through an integrated care network, enabling targeted patient intervention, improved medication adherence and program validation via advanced metrics reporting.

"Our technology addresses a critical need for clinically validated, 'out of office' blood pressure results," stated PharmaSmart chief executive officer Fred Sarkis. "Research has proven this data is needed to aid in the diagnosis and management of hypertension, the world's leading cause of death and disability. During our meetings, we demonstrated how, with the right tools in place, community pharmacy is positioned to lead the way to improved health outcomes for the 75 million Americans with high blood pressure."

At NACDS conference, PharmaSmart showcased the benefits of its universal blood pressure cuff, which the company said provides accurate results for the rising obese population. Published research has noted that people with arms over 13 inches in circumference are unable to use blood pressure kiosks found in most pharmacies. That translates to 37% of U.S. adults, many of whom are obese and at high risk for cardiovascular disease, according to PharmaSmart.

"Overcoming this serious limitation has accelerated endorsement of PharmaSmart programs by hypertension thought leaders and primary care physicians," Sarkis commented. "Such support is the first step in establishing an effective chronic disease management program."

PharmaSmart also unveiled its new MTM software, BPT-Rx, which integrates directly into the pharmacy software system and links PharmaSmart automated blood pressure results directly to the enrolled patient's electronic profile. The company said BPT-Rx supports improved patient enrollment and targeted patient intervention based on established clinical guidelines without interrupting core pharmacy workflow.

"Pharmacists using BPT-Rx can easily submit outcome-based case reports to receive qualified payer reimbursement," noted Sarkis.

In addition, PharmaSmart demonstrated its PS DataSmart database and analytics engine, currently housing over 12 million patient blood pressure readings from across North America. PS DataSmart Analytics provides clients with direct, transparent access to program metrics, enabling them to track by-store/by-day usage, program enrollment rates, hypertension rates and trends, and other metrics such as cholesterol, diabetes and body mass index (BMI) to validate the program and guide MTM strategies, the company said.

"PharmaSmart is in tune with today's retail pharmacist and the patient delivery system. As pharmacy looks to MTM reimbursement as a core ROI objective, our technology is designed to specifically meet the challenges of patient recruitment, pharmacist workflow and payer reimbursement," Sarkis explained. "For over 10 years, the industry has observed attempts to deploy multibiometric, media-focused devices into retail pharmacy. Such deployments have not been effective in driving clinical programs or pharmacy services revenue. We have demonstrated that program success hinges on a high-validity, low-complexity kiosk and a high degree of workflow integration to sustain pharmacist execution and program scalability."

Ashton Maaraba, chief operations officer at PharmaSmart, pointed out that "historically, blood pressure kiosks have been positioned as advertising vehicles, and not chronic disease management support tools" that pharmacists can use.

"It's challenging to drive pharmacist engagement in a program that is engineered to maximize advertising revenue," Maaraba stated. "Traditional self-care kiosk programs supported by OTC marketing dollars offer limited returns and fail to address the current pharmacy services imperatives. Under the current environment, pharmacy retailers are looking to drive new, scalable ROI opportunities through pharmacy services, MTM and effective patient care initiatives."

Maaraba added that PharmaSmart takes a grassroots approach to building patient engagement in clinical services.

"We are offering blood pressure care workshops or Doctor Detailing to retailers such as Big Y Foods, Walmart Canada, Associated Food Stores, Coborn's, Winn-Dixie, Mariano's, Roundy's, Le Groupe Jean Coutu, Astrup Drugs, Smart Med Rx,

Safeway Canada, Shoppers Drug Mart, Rexall and others," he stated. "Workshops are also held routinely in employee work sites. These initiatives elevate patient and physician awareness, improve prescription adherence, drive program enrollment and sustain patient engagement. They also reinforce to the participating pharmacy staff how simple and rewarding it can be to engage patients and improve their disease state therapy. This approach is game-changing."

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